

Cemetery Names

Fran Karttunen 2.7.08

Fran,

Do you feel there is a clear choice for the Founders, Old Settlers, Proprietors, etc. Burial Ground/Cemetery? Founders Burial Ground seems most fitting to me in that it seems clear and historic without gender bias. Let me know what you think.

Allen,

I agree that Founders (Founders'?) is preferable to Founding Fathers' since it doesn't tacitly exclude the settler women who were laid to rest there.

I suppose the Mashpee and Aquinnah Wampanoags would want to know what, exactly, do we think the English settlers found or founded? This is a standard query from Native Americans whenever anyone speaks, for instance, of the discovery of America/the New World. They say it wasn't lost and it wasn't new.

But the answer to what the Founders founded is clearly the English settlement on the island. That founding had tragic consequences for the Wampanoags who had been here for so very long, but it is a fact of history.

I sort of like Proprietors', but to Nantucketers it's not a familiar name for the cemetery, and I am not sure it appears anywhere except on that 20th century map.

So, if I get a vote, it's for Founders' Burial Ground.

It will be interesting to hear what the other Cemetery Commissioners and BOS members have to say.

As for the Colored Cemetery/Mill Hill Cemetery, etc., I recall Diane Holdgate saying last summer that "we" (the Cemetery Commissioners?) had renamed the cemetery at some time in the past. If it was renamed the African-American Cemetery, that renaming should be rescinded for the reasons I have already mentioned. If it has been formally renamed Mill Hill cemetery, I have no objection, but Augie Ramos, Joan Wilson-Godeau, and Sharon Liburd have expressed preference for retaining the historical name.

Fran